W 169

JACOB
THE
Plain Man

Wrestling with God until the Break of the Day, and prevailing in the Light thereof, for perfect Victory and Dominion over

ESAU
THE
Rough and Cunning Man,

And over all that would hinder him from going up to *Bethel*, the House of God, to sacrifice unto him in the place where he first appear'd unto him.

Whereby all may see, how was I after long Wrestling with, and seeking the Lord, brought off from professing and preaching that for Gospel which made not free from sin in this Life, that I might come to know the Light and Life of Jesus manifest in me, for the destroying the Works of the Devil, and giving Power to supplant & overcome all that would hinder from going up to the Mountain of the Lord's House to worship and serve him in the Life and Purity of his own Spirit, which is blessed for evermore; whose outward Name is

Laurence Steel.

London, *Printed and Sold by* Andrew Sowle, *at the Crooked Billet in* Holloway-Lane, *near* Shoreditch, 1683.

READER,

These things were required of me to give forth to be read in the fear of the Lord, (which if kept to) will make a right Application of all unto thy own Estate and Condition, either by way of condemning thee or justifying of thee; and may, if in singleness of heart thou readest, help to open thy understanding in the Discerning of these things, which the Lord (through the days of Judgmet, and Tryals that are past, and those that are yet to come) hath and will more and more supplant and overturn, and what he hath and will yet more and more establish and exalt in the room thereof, that so thou mayst come timely to escape the one, and to joyn unto the other, lest the day of the Lord, which will be as a Thief in the night, overtake thee unawares.

A Teſtimony to the Goſpel of Chriſt Jeſus,

As Anciently preached and believed in by the Primitive Apoſtles *and* Chriſtians; *with the Manner of my coming to witneſs and receive the ſame.*

THe Goſpel of Chriſt (as it was preached and witneſſed by the Primitive *Chriſtians*) is the Power of God unto Salvation unto them that do believe, in which Goſpel the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all [mark, All] Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men, who hold the Truth (which is the Goſpel that ſhould ſave them) in Unrighteouſneſs: (So the Truth is in Unrighteous Men, and teſtifieth againſt their Unrighteouſneſs, in which it is by them held down and impriſoned, which keeps them from witneſſing Deliverance thereby.) And in this Goſpel there is no Glad-tidings to any in Unrighteouſneſs, nor Juſtification in Ungodlineſs, but Wrath revealed againſt it, and abideth upon all ſuch as hold the Truth therein, until they come to bow to the Wrath of God which is revealed in them for the cutting down of all Unrighteouſneſs and Ungodlineſs, and for the freeing of the Truth which is held therein; and ſuch come through the righteous Judgments of God to know that Righteouſneſs, which is Chriſt, the Power of God, to be revealed, for the removing and taking away of the Wrath that was upon them, and the bringing them to Life and Juſtification, who are hereby made Witneſſes, that *what may be known of God*, viz. of his Eternal power, to ſanctifie and redeem out of Sin and Unrighteouſneſs, *is*

manifeſt in them; for God hath ſhewed it unto them to be his Goſpel and Power unto Salvation, who do come from holding of the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs, to hold this Myſtery of Faith in a pure Conſcience; ſo this Goſpel of Chriſt, which is a Myſtery, was manifeſted or ſhewed to the Primitive Saints to be within. And how was it ſhewed? Not by Tradition from Man, or any outward Letter, but by Revelation; Therefore it is ſaid, *The wrath of God is revealed* (mark) and *The Righteouſneſs of God is revealed*; and *Paul* calls the Goſpel, which he received not by Tradition from any, *The Revelation* [mark] *of his Son in him.* And how was it that Chriſt came to be revealed in *Paul*, but by the Light, which exceeded the Brightneſs of the Sun, the outward natural Light, which Light was the Appearance of Jeſus of *Nazareth*, which alſo inwardly ſhewed him, and prickt him for his Perſecution, which he ſaw not, nor was not judged for by the outward Letter of the Law, according to which he was blameleſs: And *Paul* being thus met with and ſtopt by a greater Power and Authority than that by which he was before acting, it was hard for him to kick againſt the Pricks of this Light; but he fell down, both he and his Companions, with their Commiſſion from the High-Prieſt, and all their Letter-knowledge before this Light of Jeſus, which was greater then all; and here *Paul* lay until the Light that ſtruck him down ſaid unto him, *Stand up*; and in the riſing up, after he had known the inward Pricks and Terrors of the Lord, he came to receive a Power and Commiſſion, to turn the People from Darkneſs unto the Light, which he elſe-where calls the *Revelation of Chriſt in him*; and when the Saints heard that *Paul* Preached of and by virtue from Chriſt revealed in him, which Goſpel he once ſought to deſtroy, they glorified God in him [mark, in him.] And this was and is the true Goſpel,

pel, and the manner of the Saints receiving of it, *viz.* by *Revelation*, not by *Tradition* from men or Writings; and if an Angel from Heaven should bring any other Gospel, he was to be accursed: And this was and is the true Foundation, other then which no man can lay, upon which the Ancient *Christians* built their Hope of Glory, *viz.* Christ in them, which was not another then Jesus of *Nazareth*, who was with them, and now came to be manifest in them for the the destroying of the Works of the Enemy, that so he and his Works being cast out, the Seed of God, which is Christ the greater Power, might only remain in perfect Dominion and Possession of the Hearts, out of the good Treasure whereof good fruits, and Works were to be brought forth to his Glory, who is blessed forever.

Now, this Gospel of Christ I could not meet with, or hear preached in any of the Professions that I was conversant in, whose Faith was, that *Revelation was ceased, and that there was not a total Cessation from Sin* (which is the Work of the Devil) *attainable in this Life, nor no such Grace or Light given to Mankind, by which they might come to deny all Ungodliness, and all Worldly Lusts; but that if the Conversation were reformed, yet there would be Lust and Sin still remaining within to the Life's end, from the Commission whereof none could be fully freed by any Power or Strength, which God had given on this side the Grave.* Nor did I receive this Gospel by Tradition from man, or any Writings, Learning or Wisdom of my own, but from the living God, who separated me for his Service from the Womb, and placed his Fear in me, which inclined me in the beginning of my dayes to seek his Glory and Honour above the Pleasures of this World, and by the Riches of his free Grace drew me out of those Wayes in which many Children were walking to their Destruction; so that in the Feeling of those Movings

vings and ſtirrings of his Spirit (which I plainly remember from the ſixth and ſeventh years of my Age) I often left my Companions and Recreations that I was engaged with, to ſeek ſome Place for Prayer, and for the eaſing of my Heart unto him, fearing that if I anſwered not his Call at that time, I ſhould not feel the ſame drawing afterwards, which ſometimes I found to my Sorrow; and the ſame Power conſtrained me to cry to him, To acquaint me with himſelf, and to convert me from every Evil Way and Work, which I was prone to, that I might gain others unto him, and if he called me to it, Dye for him, as I read many of the Martyrs, who were weak in themſelves, he enabled to do. And being devoted to the Miniſtry from my Birth by my Parents, who were Zealous Profeſſors of the *Independent*-Way, they ſpared no Pains to inſtruct me in the Principles of that Religion, nor any Coſt for the Education of me in the Knowledge of that Learning that was eſteemed requiſite for that Work: So that about the twelfth year of my Age I was placed abroad with other Children at the Schoole, by whoſe Examples and Importunity I was drawn to ſpend my Leiſure-Hours in thoſe Sports and Paſtimes which were accounted harmleſs, and by Reaſon of my Earneſtneſs therein, I neglected to anſwer the Movings of the Spirit of God, which was near me, and would often have kept me back from going with them, whoſe Vain Words and Actions were a Burthen to me, or elſe would have taken me off ſometimes in the midſt of my Play, and called me to ſeek the Lord for my Soul, the Motions of which were day after day quenched by my Diſobedience, until, as to my Feeling, it had ceaſed to ſtrive with me; ſo that when I went to pray or ſeek the *Lord*, my *Heart* was ſhut up, and my Words returned unto me again, and I ſtood as one ſmitten before the Lord, not being able many times to

utter

utter or bring forth a word, because of the Guilt and Condemnation that was upon me when I came to be retired from my *Companions*, which Guilt I heaped up for some years, until the Reckoning was high between *me* and the *Lord*, whose Judgments and Indignation so seized upon *me* at last, as that I knew not but *I was forsaken forever, and had sinned out the Day of my Visitation*, and would have bowed to any Terms for the least Hopes of Mercy, or escaping the *Torments of Hell* that were before me, or for the obtaining the Stirring and Striving of the Spirit of God with me, as formerly I had felt it; but my Cry seemed to be shut out, so that my Life became a burden to me, and all that I enjoyed was embittered by the *Wrath* and *Judgments* of the Lord, which followed me whereso'ever I went, or whatsoever I did, so that there was no strugling with it, or diverting of it, which brought a Wasting and Consumption upon my Body, which I never fully recover'd to this time; and this continued for many Months, in which I scarcely opened my heart to any but the Lord, who through his Chastizements and Rebukes, in which I did pertake in Measure with Christ in his Sufferings and Baptism, brought me by his Word of Power to some hope of Mercy, and escaping of his Wrath, not by justifying of me in my Sin, but cleansing me in Measure from Sin and the Love of it, which Tidings was more precious to me than the Gain of the whole World, though *my Body* was left very weak, and *my Strength* decayed, which in time was by the same Word restored to the Admiration of my Relations and Acquaintance, that knew me in my Sickness. And now my Fears and Distrusts were Banished by the Risings of the Life and Spirit of God in me, which wrought more frequently and powerfully then before, drawing me into greater Watchfulness over my Thoughts, Words and

Actions,

Actions, and into an higher Abstinence from the Pleasure and Delights of this World, moving me to reprove such as dishonoured the Name of the Lord, or did offend and grive his Spirit by the Mis-spending Time in Vanity, in which I spared no Relations or others; and often times I was constrained to Warn and Reprove prophane and wanton People upon the Road, and to ease my self in Evil Company by crying to the Lord, which brought a Fear and Dread upon them, and none durst to with-stand the Power that was with me in any Reproof, Prayer or Exhortation, which was adminiſtred in the Denyal of *my own will*, in which I never went without a certain Reward of Peace in *my Bosom*, which were the best Times that ever I knew before the Truth was clearly manifested to me, when I was not yet setled in any Form or Profession, or observed any stinted Times or Way of Praying or seeking the Lord, but as by his Spirit he moved upon my Heart, at Home or Abroad, to cry unto him, I obeyed, wondring and admiring what that was which was so sweet and pleasant in its Incomes, and drew me into a daily waiting for it, as my Life, and by which I was broken and tendred in the receiving of every Mercy and Blessing as from the Lord, and burdened and wounded with what was dead and unsavoury. After which I was stirred up to seek after a People with whom I might have Unity in the feeling of the same Life and Experience of the same *work* which I had pass'd through. And in the Zeal of my heart, as one rais'd from the Dead, that diligently minded the Improvement of the Time that I was intrusted with, I neglected no opportunities in all Seasons and Weathers, without regarding the Health of my Body to go to hear such as were esteemed *Lively Awakening Preachers*, first of the *Presbyterians*, and then of the *Independents*, unto whom I joyned my self as a Member, among whom

whom I felt a Measure of the Stirrings of the Power of God, which brought terror upon the Ungodly, and seized many that were loose and vain, with a Sense of their Iniquity, and made them cry out under it, and raised those *Hungerings* and *Thirstings after Righteousness*, which caused many to break forth in earnest Cryes and Supplications unto God *for Deliverance from the Bonds of Sin and Iniquity*, which was become burdensom unto them, and for the obtaining of that righteousness which was more precious in their eye then the *Glories* and *Pleasures of the World*, which they seemed dead unto for a time: And with this Work I had Unity, and delighted to be with this People in the days of their Tenderness, and to spend time in *Prayer* and *Conference* with them. After which, as we came to settle in the Form, and stint and limit the Spirit of God, so I perceived a dying to the Life that moved and bubbled up in us, and caused us to breath and cry to the Lord, so that when we came together, we were full of *Complaints* of *Dryness*, *Barrenness* and *Luke-warmness* that we were come unto, and for want of those living Breathings, which once we felt, which we were ready to believe that we should never come out of these Complaints, to know perfect Victory over our Corruptions here below; and here in the Integrity of my Heart, I rather blamed and judged my self (even when I knew no real Neglect by my self) then to blame the Ministry and Way that was preached, until the Lord showed me the true Reason and Cause not to be from my own Carelessness, in the Neglect of any prescribed Means which I followed, but because of the Shortness and Defect of that Gospel in which there

was no Power declared of, *that might free from Sin in this Life, nor Faith to believe in the Manifestation of Christ, who was come* (not only to bind the Strong Man, which some of us knew for a time, until he came to break his Bonds, and get loose again, but) to *destroy the seed of the Serpent, and his Works in us*, which being *destroyed*, so as not to remain longer in us, we might come to be born of God, so as not to commit *Sin*, because of the *Seed* of *God*, which is *Christ Jesus*, remaining alone in us in full Power and perfect Dominion over the Seed of the Serpent and his Works: But instead thereof, they declared of a *Justification* and *Salvation by Christ* which was consistent with the remaining of the Enemy, and of his Works of Darkness and Defilement in them unto the Life's End, when the time of Redemption was past: So that after they had brought the People to a sense of Sin and Iniquity, and Desire of Deliverance, which was good and precious in its day, they could bring them to no further Perfection in this Life, then the laying again and again (as often as they performed any Duties or Services) the Foundation of Repentance from Dead Works, wherewith their best Services were polluted, and the laying again of the Foundation of Faith towards *God*, whom they professed still to be going forwards, but could not come to him, having not their Consciences purged from Dead Works, which all must have that would offer up living Sacrifices, and work the Works of God, which are never to be repented of. And since (according to their Gospel) a thorow cleansing from sin was not to be effected in this Life, nor could not be after this Life, in which the Redemtion

demption of the Soul ceaſeth, they ſhould have ſhewed ſome Middle Place for the Accompliſhment of this neceſſary Work, without which there could be no Admiſſion into the Kingdom of God.

And in the Senſe of that Decay of Life and Spiritualneſs, and that Earthlineſs that was got up among Profeſſors, who by their faſhioning themſelves according to the World, had loſt their Teſtimony for God, I eaſed my ſelf in the firſt Publick Opportunity that was offered me in *London*, the Place of my Nativity, from theſe Words of *Paul*, *All ſeek their own things, and not the things of Jeſus Chriſt*; and another time at a Faſt, from the Teſtimony of *Jeremiah*, *Though* Moſes *and* Samuel *ſtood before me, yet could not my Heart be towards this People; caſt them out of my Sight, let them go forth*: Which things were uttered not to pleaſe man, but to diſcharge my Conſcience, in the manifeſting thoſe Provocations, which was a Grief to ſee in ſuch as profeſſed Salvation and Redemption by Chriſt Jeſus, and yet were not to be diſtinguiſhed from them who made no Profeſſion of him; & for my plain dealing I met with much Love, and ſoliciting to come oftner among them. Thus having ſought into the higheſt Profeſſions I could hear of, in which I was uprightly deſirous to know the utmoſt of what was to be found of Life and Purity, which did not amount to that Spiritualneſs and Victory over Sin, which I looked for in a People, and for which I was raiſed up; wherefore in Refuſal of more publick Imployments I accepted of a private Place in *Dorſet-ſhire*, where I was to tutor their Children, and pray and preach in the Family for ſuch a yearly Stipend, which when it came to be paid I

was

was not suffered to take any thing for Preaching, which also I denyed in *London*: And in this Family where there were many of a seeking enquiring Spirit, I kept up the Family Worship, according to the Practice and Example of the best reputed Christians which I walkt strictly by, and the Meeting on the *First Dayes*, unto which many People came, until that I came to Preach from those Words, *Heb.* 4. 12. *For the Word of God is Quick and Powerful, and Sharper then any two-edged Sword, Piercing, even to the Dividing asunder the Joynts and the Marrow* at; the finishing of which Scripture, after I was retired into my Chamber, the Word of the Lord came unto me after this manner, *Bring no more vain Oblations before me, but wait upon the living Motions of my Spirit, to bring forth that Sacrifice which is accepted with me* (out of which I could see no Offerings accepted of God, or prest by Christ or his Apostles upon any) withal reminding me of what I had formerly felt of the Quickness and Sharpness of this Word to cut me down from my vain Pleasures & Pastimes, which was the same that was now come to cut me down from my vain Oblations; by which the Spirit of God was again quencht & limited, and to bring me to that which was more pure and spiritual, and that the Issue of withstanding this counsel of God, would be the casting me under *Despair* again; which words, as I was required, so I declared them to one of the heads of the family, desiring the *Prayer-Bell* might not ring for me, for that I now felt the *Word of the Lord* to be really as I had preacht it, as a sword to cut me down from all vain oblations, so that there was no strugling, or resisting, or kicking against the Pricks of this living Word, or satisfying

of

of it, but by coming out of all that which I had taken up by Tradition, or Imitation of any, out of its Leadings, which was not out of any Dis-respect to that spiritual Prayer & Supplication which was exhorted unto in the Scriptures, which I did the more earnestly watch unto; but for Fear of offending God by offering that which was become Sin and Iniquity to him, even the *Solemn Assembly*, as it is called *Isa.* 1. 13. But all this while no Man stopt me, nor did any Persecution stop me, but I was the more enlarged by it; neither did I act from any Counsel or President of any of the people called *Quakers*, from whose Converse I kept my self, so as to be acquainted with none of them in that Country, or in any other place where I had lived, & also from reading their Books, or going to their Meetings, because of the Danger of Infection that was reported of them; and when a Servant that lived in the Family, where I was inclined to go among them, I diswaded her from it: And now having laid down all at the Feet of God in a readiness to follow him whitherever he would lead me, I enquired of the Lord what was the Way, & People, and Foundation that he would establish and set up in the Room of what he had pulled down? and the Lord shewed me, and caused me to declare the substance of it to the Family, that according to the Vision of the Prophet *Isaiah* in the six first verses of the second chapter, *That he was now come to establish the Spiritual Mountain of his House, a Worship which Christ set up in the Dayes of his Flesh, not only over the Mountains of* Samaria *and* Jerusalem, *but over all the Mountains and Hills which have since risen up in the Apostacy, under what Form or* *Read vers. 1 and 2.*

 Denomination

Denomination soever, in all which Mountains and Hills there was no Mountain of the Lord's House, where he had his Residence and Dwelling, and therefore he would establish this Mountain for his House, unto which all the Nations (where the Enemy had set up his Mountains and House, in which he had his Seat) should flow, so that there should be no other Mountain or House of the Lord, but this alone, which should in time make the other Mountains desolate, as without Inhabitants, which Mountain man in all his Might, Strength and Wisdom, should have none of the Glory of the Establishment or Exaltation thereof, but the Lord alone, whose House it was, who would be known to be the God of Jacob, *that was come forth to supplant and overturn the lofty Mountains and Hills, and all that dwelt therein, by such a poor despised People as* Jacob *was.*

Read v. 3.

And that according to the Prophet's Vision, *The People that came to this Mountain of the Lord's House were gone up into a higher State of Supplanting and overcoming, then was known in any of the other Mountains & Hills, and as they had the highest and freest Mission and Authority, so they had the highest Message and call, to wit, to come up to the Teachings of the God of* Jacob, *who was come to supplant and overturn all the Teachers of the Mountains and Hills, whose Teachings so affected those that came unto it, as that they were resolved to walk in no other Paths or Wayes, but what the God of* Jacob *taught them, according to their Language* (we will walk) *nor would they go back any more to the Mountains and Hills where the Lord had no house or dwelling, nor no teaching of the poor and needy how to supplant and overcome their Enemies; for that now they were come to an higher and better Mountain, which was as* Zion *and* Jerusalem, *where the*

the Infallible Word and Law of God was revealed and given forth, as it was to Jacob, *who had no other written Word or Law to walk by*; read ver. 4.

It was shewed me, *That by and through this People* (who were now come) *The Lord would cause his Judgments and Rebukes to be poured out upon all the Swords and Spears which were used to force the People to, or to detain them in the Mountains and Hills, or from coming to the Mountain of the Lord's House, which needed not any Sword or Spear to establish or exalt it, or to force the Nations that were ready and free of themselves to flow unto it. And that the Lord would also indue this People, as he did* Jacob, *with so much Thriftiness and Prudence, as not to waste or throw away what might be improved for the good of the Creation, so that, as they should not make any Spoil upon the Body by the Sword and Spear, so neither should they waste the Swords that had spoiled, but rather beat them into Plow-shares, and the Spears into Pruning-hooks, and so turn destructive Weapons into useful Instruments, for the publick prosperity of the Nations, unto which they should become a Blessing, as* Jacob *and his seed was: That their Faith and Belief should be so high, as that the Judgments and Rebukes of the Lord should never cease after the Proclaiming this Mountain, until (Supplanter-like) it had brought down all Nations, Parties and Perswasions to cease from rising up one against another; and that the Concord and Agreement of the Nations should be so great, as that (the House of the Lord being now come, for which they fought) they should learn War no more, nor seek to take up any Sword or Spear, which they had beaten into Plow-shares and Pruning-hooks, which now they were to learn the use of, as that which should abide when the Sword and all the Trade and Traffick of the Moun-*

rains that was for War, ſhould ceaſe and come to an end; read ver. 5.

It was ſhewed me, as theſe verſes opened one after another, that the People unto whom I was to go, *were* (as to the nobility of their off ſpring) *of the houſe and family of* Worm Jacob, *the* Supplanter, *and that as* Jacob *did, ſo they ſhould alſo ſupplant the Nations, by the moſt unlikelieſt Wayes and Means*, viz. *Not by Roughneſs, as* Eſau, *who was the Father of the Mountains, but by Smoothneſs and Gentleneſs, not by Policy and Cunningneſs, as* Eſau, *but by Plainneſs and Simplicity; not by going from Home, and ſeeking and toyling abroad, like* Eſau *the* Hunter, *but by quiet abiding in their Tents & Habitations; not by Might nor force of outward Weapons, in the diſuſe of which* Jacob *was ſingular from his Predeceſſors, but by Strength of Prayers and ſpiritual Wreſtlings*, which is atteſted by ſeveral learned Men, upon *Gen.* 48. 22. *not by any bloody Plots or Conſpiracies, nor by any Confederacy with the Houſe of* Levi, *the Father of the Prieſts, in whoſe Houſe* (*but not in* Jacob's) *the Inſtruments of Cruelty were found*, upon whom *Jacob* poured out an irrevokable Curſe, and in the Hatred and Antipathy of his innocent Mind, charged his Soul, not to enter into his Aſſembly, nor his Honour to be united to him——Not by the Dictates or Example of any precedent men or Scripture that was not then written, but by following the Guidance of God's Word and Spirit, which brought him up over all Oppoſition & Aſſaults to *Bethel* the place of Worſhip and Sacrifice unto God, in which Reſpects *Jacob* was ſingled out by the Holy Ghoſt, as a Lively Type of the People whom God would call and raiſe up from a low Degree in the laſt Dayes.

And

And I had not only a ſight of this People by their Doctrine, Practice and Off-ſpring before mentioned, but alſo *By the Principle by which they ſhould walk, and from which they ſhould receive Power to ſupplant and overturn, which was the* Light of the Lord, *which* Light *their Meſſage ſhould be to call the People to*; O House of *Jacob*, come ye, and let us walk in the Light of the Lord, *which Light was ſufficient to bring them off from the Mountains and Hills, up to the Houſe of God, where the God of* Jacob *teacheth and giveth forth his Word and Law, which is not the Light of man's Dictates or Examples, but the Light of the God of* Jacob, *by which* Jacob *walked, and was taught to ſupplant and overcome; ſo that, as this Mountain came to be eſtabliſhed on the Top of all the Mountains and Hills, ſo the Light alſo ſhould be eſtabliſhed and exalted on the Top of all the Foundations, Rules and Principles of the Mountains that walked by Tradition: The ſufficiency of which Light ſhould not be only manifeſted by the Benefit of them that walk therein, but by the forſaking of thoſe that ſhould reject and deſpiſe it, the Cauſe of which ſhould be their being filled and repleniſht with ſomething elſe; ſo that there ſhould be no more room to receive Christ in his ſpiritual Appearance, as a Light, than there was room in the Inn, which was filled and repleniſht with other Gueſts, to receive him in his outward Appearance, becauſe of which God would cauſe his Judgments and Rebukes to paſs upon the Treaſures and Idols, and Glory, of the Mountains which had repleniſht and filled up their hearts, ſo as to ſtain their Glory, until he had left them not a Staff or a Stay to lean upon, and had cauſed the Mark of his Diſpleaſure to paſs upon the Mighty Man, the Man of War, the Captain of fifty, the Judge,*

Read ver. 5.

Read ver. 6 to the end.

Judge, the Prophet, the Prudent, the Counsellor, the Cunning Artificer and Eloquent Orator, so that no Rank or Degree of men, that had despised this Mountain or Light should be able by all their Power & Prudence, Art or Cunning to escape the Stroke of the God of Jacob, *who is come forth in his spiritual Host & Army to Supplant and overturn, until the Lofty Looks of Man, that looks scornfully upon this People and Light, as* Esau *did upon* Jacob, *be brought low, and his Haughtiness be abased, and he made of no account, that so the God of* Jacob *may alone be reverenced and exalted in his own House and People, and there be no Mountain, House or Principle left to stand in competition with him.*

Thus being the second time ransomed through Judgment, and the Way of the Lord so plainly opened unto me, I could no longer delay seeking out some of the People here described, whom I was convinced were come, but I knew not where to find, but as the Lord put it into my Heart to go to such a Professor's House, and desire him to send for one of the People called *Quakers*, which I did; and when I came to him, and enquired of him concerning that People, he told me, *There were in that Village but Three or Four Families of Poor Inconsiderable People, that were mean in Ability, and that the Men were at Harvest, but their Wives were at Home*; So I sent for one of them, whom when she came, I took strict notice of her Carriage and Words; and when I had discoursed with her about the Light of Christ, which they Professed in them, and what Benefit they reaped by walking in it, to overcome their Spiritual Enemies, and to work Salvation for them; her Testimony so suited to what the Lord had before shew'd unto me,

and

and the Gravity and Savour of her Language and Deportment was such; counselling me, *To mind the Truth in me, which would bring me further, as I kept low and obedient to the Cross of Christ Jesus, for that the Lord had a further Work in his due time to do in me and by me*; which Advice was of God, so that I could not but confess to the Wisdom she was guided by, which I esteemed the more for her *outward Meanness and Plainness:* and afterwards, as I discoursed with her Husband, *a plain Man*, in his Return from Labour, I found, *that their whole Stay and Support was in the Spirit of the Lord, whose Teachings and Leadings they waited for at all times, to guide them out of all Evil Thoughts, Words and Works, into all Truth, in which God alone is worshipped*; which Testimony best reached my Conscience, and answered the Spirit of Truth in my own Heart, the manner of whose stirrings & movings from a Child, and of its being quenched, and coming to be raised again, I have before declared of, concerning which I never met with any that testified so feelingly and experimentally of the inward Work of *Redemption* and *Regeneration* by Christ Jesus, in the Sense of which my Heart was upon the first Meeting firmly united to them, so as from that time not to look back any more unto any thing the Lord had called me out of, but resolved, *to take up my Lot with them*, which I signified to my *Relations*. And when I returned in the Evening from this *plain people* and came in before the *Counsellor* and his Wife with my usual Language and Deportment, which was out of the Cross of Christ, which I knew was unlike to the *plain Language of the Scriptures, and Behaviour of Christ and his Apostles*, I was soon reproved for

for Respect of Persons, and lost my Peace and Life that was raised in me, and so went to my Bed under Judgment, crying unto the Lord, *Not to withhold his Peace and Comfort from me, nor to let this put any stop to what he intended further to make known unto me*, Promising *to obey him, if he would spare me to the morning*; which when I was risen and had seated my self, the *Counsellour's* Wife, whom I well esteemed and respected, came into the Chamber, unto whom, because of the Fear of the Lord, I used that *plain Language* and *Deportment* which I was convinced of, in which, though it may seem as a small thing, I had great Joy and Peace; and when I was asked the *Occasion of that Change and Alteration that was in me*, I told her to this effect, *That I was now confirmed by Converse, that the People which I Preached of to be the* House of Jacob, *the Plain Man were come, the Way of whose supplanting should be by that which seemed Foolishness and Simplicity unto the Nations:* After which it went forth into the Family and Country, *That I was become a Quaker.* And the next first Day, being alone at Home, I was required, *To go to the Place where I first spake with the woman, and to seek out their Meeting;* which I did, and when I came, I found a few People met together in a serious manner, waiting upon the Lord, among whom (though few, if any words were utter'd) I felt that *Presence* & *Power of God* in which I had more Satisfaction than in my own Preaching & praying, and such a room & place this People had with me (as still they have) that I thought no time too long which I spent with them, or Pains too much to go to their Meetings, which were far distant from that Place; and the more I

was

was acquainted with them, the more I was united to them, especially after that I had heard their Testimonies and Declarations, and was a Witness of the Life and Power that accompanied *Mean Illiterate* Persons, such as the first that I heard was, I was the more joyned unto them, whose Prayers and Supplications were more prevalent to bring me unto, and keep me in the Light, than all the Prayers and Fasts of those that deny its Guidance were to keep me from it.

Thus, according to my earnest Desires to the Lord, to bring forth the Work which he would establish in the room of that which he had pulled down before I went out of that Family, I was for about 2 *weeks* among them in a *Testimony* to the *Truth*, in the Risings of which I felt more and more *freedom* to be witnessed from my *Soul's enemies*, and a drawing me again into a watchfulness over my own thoughts words and actions, that nothing might arise or work in my Heart but what was of God, who was now come to judge down every Evil Thought and inclination in the first Motion and Rise of it; so that though there was an Abatement of that Bodily Exercise, which profiteth not, yet there was an increase of inward Exercise, to keep a Conscience void of Offence, not only in the Sight of Man, who lookt at the Outward Appearance, but also in the Sight of God, that searched the Heart. And in that Family I met with much *Christian*-like Forbearance and Tenderness, not out of any Respect to the People and Principle, which they esteemed too mean and low, but out of Respect to that Uprightness which they believed to be in me: And now the time of our part-

ing being come, in which I must leave them, which (because of that Love and Endreadness that had been between us) it was hard to do, but that my Heart was taken up with Christ's being come to receive me to himself, and to dwell and walk in me as his *house* and *temple*, for which End he had seperated & called me out from all that was defiled: And since I could no longer perform the Office of a *Chaplain*, as it was expected of me, which if I could they desired no other, they were willing to give me Satisfaction, according to our Agreement for the time that I had been among them upon a double Account, *viz.* of *Tutoring their Children*, and of *Preaching*: As to the *Teaching the Children*, I was free to take Consideration; but as for *Preaching*, notwithstanding the Money was told out, and I was urged and pressed to receive it, I was forbiden by the Lord to take any, and so left it. But to clear the Family of all Suspitions and Jealousies that might arise in any, touching the Ground of my leaving them, I consented, upon the first Motion thereof, to leave a Certificate, signifying to all that might be concerned, *That I left the Family only upon the Account of some higher Discovery of Truth on my part, not apprehending it to be the will of the Lord to be worshipped any otherwise then in Spirit and Truth, and that as to Outward Encouragements, they rather exceeded than came short of my Expectation.* And thus in pure Love and Desires of the Spiritual Welfare of every one, I left that Family, which next to my own Relations were dear to me, who had a full Sight and Experience of my Conversation, as to the Work and Dealings of the Lord with me in that Day. This was about the 7th Moneth of the

Year

Year 1673. After which I came forward to my Relations, among whom I knew not one that was inclined to the Truth, who might ſtand with me in a Teſtimony for it, but all Oppoſed it, and joyned with their Teachers againſt it, with whom notwithſtanding, as I ſtood innocently in the Counſel of God, which led me to yield true Submiſſion and Honour to them next to himſelf, I found way made for my Reception; and alſo open'd the Hearts of his People unto me, to whom I was a Stranger, but as the Lord gave them a ſenſe of that Upright Deſire of Truth and Righteouſneſs which only brought me among them, in whoſe Meetings I waited as one of the Meaneſt and Loweſt of them for about twelve Monoths, ſitting under the Droppings and Diſtillings of that Life and Power, which the Lord was pleaſed to fill others with in the Meeting, and to grow daily more and more (as it is daily my Endeavour) in the inward Experience of the Redeeming, Purifying and Quickening Virtue of the Truth, which (in the ſenſe of that Love of God in bringing me among this People, to eat of the Bread of Life, when ſo many Wiſe and Prudent were left behind, feeding upon Husks) often broke my Heart, and cauſed Deſires in me, *That I might never more appear out of the living Stirrings and movings of the Spirit and Life of Chriſt, nor ſtay behind it when it did move.* After which it pleaſed the Lord in his own time (according to my own and others Travail and Supplication) to cauſe his Life to break forth in me, ſometimes in a few words of Prayer, ſometimes of Exhortation, in which the Lord gave me Power and Faithfulneſs to eaſe my ſelf, and my Word's return-

ed not to me again, but had entrance; and as I kept low and humble, giving Honour and Glory to Christ alone in his Appearance, so I felt the Increase of that Authority and Life, which made way in the Hearts of them to whom I was sent, in whose Consciences it is my desire to stand recommended, and to be felt of them who are in Life, as a Savour of Life unto Life.

And thus the Lord having raised me up, and spared me through much Weakness and Labour unto this Day to see the Desire of my Soul accomplished in great Measure, according to my Faith when I first laid down my Ministry; I do still wait (in Submission to the Will of the Lord) for the Day, when that breathing Seed of God, which is yet left in the dead and lifeless Professions, may become ripe for the Harvest, then shall there be no Want of Reapers, who shall put in their Sickles, and gather them into the House which God hath provided for to receive all that are Low and Poor in their own Eyes, for want of Power and Strength to overcome that which letteth and hindreth their perfect Redemption; into which House God hath called me, as a Fore-Runner of Thousands that are yet ungathered, unto which being come up, I can't go back or down unto them, but can freely serve the lowest of them by living Supplications to the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, for the bringing them into that Fold, where he makes his Flocks that were wearied and driven from Mountain to Hill, to rest at Noon in the Bosom of their Beloved, whose Tents they need no longer enquire after, or go to the Watch-men of the Night for Direction, but by the Light of the Lord

are

are they brought up to *Bethel*, the Houſe of the God of *Jacob*, where thoy deſire forever to dwell, and offer unto the God of their Redemption, Victories and Deliverance, as I do, the Sacrifice of Praiſe and of Thanksgiving for evermore.

And now I ſhall ſhut up all with the *Teſtimony* of the Paſtor of that *Independent* Congregation of which I was a Member, and walkt with for ſeveral year, who (beſt among them) knew the bent of my Heart, who in his *Letter* to my *Mother*, ſoon after my Convincement of the Truth, gives this Teſtimony of the Grounds of my leaving them, to come to this People, in which he hath confirmed what I have before mentioned; his words are theſe, *The great Stumbling block to him hath been our Looſe, Low and Earthly Converſation:* And is not Looſeneſs, Lowneſs and Earthlineſs Stumbling block enough, eſpecially in them that Profeſs to be Members of Chriſt Jeſus, and look for Salvation by him, and to be gathered out of the World? He may well call it Great; What can lay a greater Stumbling-block in the Way of the Upright, than to make ſo high a Profeſſion a Cloak and Covering for ſo much Sin and Iniquity? Would it not be far better and more Honour to Chriſt, to ceaſe Profeſſing of him, which doth but make them the greater Stumbling-blocks, until they have departed from theſe Iniquities? And is not this enough to acquit me from ſeparating from ſuch Aſſemblies and Congregations, that are thus Poluted? Further, he ſaith, *He is earneſt to get up to More Spiritualneſs than he ſees among us:* And muſt I be repreſented in ſo many places as a *deluded deceived Perſon*,

ſon, and *one that is fallen from the Faith*, and *apoſtatized to Error*, and *a Saddener of the Hearts of the Upright*, and prayed and faſted for, as ſuch, and all for leaving of ſuch People as are Looſe, Low and Earthly, to get up to more Spiritualneſs? Or can I look upon ſuch as true Friends to my Soul, as would hinder me from ſo good an Exchange? Further, he ſaith, *which he apprehends is to be found among this People*: Yea, I do more then apprehend it; for I have felt and experienced for ſome years that Spiritualneſs to be among them, which keeps them that walk in it from Looſeneſs, Lowneſs and Earthlineſs; ſo that I have no Deſire to return to them whoſe Converſations are ſo Looſe, &c. as he confeſſeth. Further, he ſaith, *I am perſwaded, this is that which hath carried him among them, more then any Reſpect that he hath to their odd Opinions*: Here he hath bound all with his Perſwaſion from that certain Knowledge he had of me for many years, in which he knew my Bent was after Spiritualneſs and Heavenly-mindedneſs; and herein he hath ſpoken the Truth of me, *viz.* That it was Looſeneſs, Lowneſs and Earthlineſs that ſtumbled, and drew me off from them; and that it was with deſire of more Spiritualneſs that I came among this People; and my Deſire hath been therein largely anſwered, to the Joy and Satisfaction of my Soul. Further, he continueth to ſay, *If we gain this by his Fall, to be provoked to more Heavenlineſs and Spiritualneſs, and to ſavour leſs of this Earth, we ſhall be Gainers by his Loſs*: Here he ſhould have minded his former Expreſſions and Perſwaſion, and have conſidered, whether the Lord doth ſuffer ſuch to fall whoſe great Stumbling is at Looſeneſs, Lowneſs and Earthlineſs,

lineſs, and who are earneſt to get up to more Spiritualneſs, which is more according to the Will of God: Or are they not fallen and loſt, who according to his Confeſſion, are ſtill where they were many years ago, after all his Preaching and Praying, are not got up above their Looſeneſs, Lowneſs and Earthlineſs; whom he preſſeth and indeed it is high time for them all to manifeſt better Fruits of their Profitting, and to ſavour leſs of this Earth, which hath been the Cauſe of my leaving them, and to get up to that Spiritualneſs and Heavenlineſs, where they will find me, and ſo in this Spiritualneſs we ſhall be united again. But has not the *cauſe* of this *unprofitableneſs* or *ſtanding at a ſtay* been for want of coming to that Grace which is ſufficient to teach all that learn of it, to deny All [mark, *All*] Ungodlineſs, and All worldly Luſts, which makes them Stumbling-blocks in the Way of others, that ſo through the denying of theſe, they might come to live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly, not only hereafter, but in this preſent Evil World, and ſo not ſtumble, but gain others by their Converſation, without which all Verbal Confeſſion and Acknowledgments are vain and fruitleſs, and leaves them no better then they were before.

THE END.

BOOKS Printed and Sold by *Andrew Sowle* at the Crooked Billet in *Holloway-Lane* in *Shoreditch*, 1683.

NO Cross, No Crown: Or a Discourse shewing the Nature and Discipline of the holy Cross of Christ. By *William Penn.*

An Answer to a Libel, call'd, *The Quakers Opinions.* By *W. Penn.*

England's present Interest discovered, with honour to the Prince and safety to the People. By *W. P.*

An Epistle to the Churches of Jesus. By *W P.*

An Epistle to the Children of Light. By *W. P.*

An Address to Protestants upon the present Conjuncture. *W. P.*

A brief state and examination of Liberty Spiritual. By *W. P.*

Quakerism a new Nick-Name for Old Christianity. By *W. P.*

An Epistle, containing a solemn Farewell, *&c.* By *W. P.*

Due Order of Law and Justice pleaded, against Irregular and Arbitrary Proceedings. By George Whitehead.

The Real *Quaker* a Real *Protestant.* By *G. W.*

Judgment fixed upon the Accuser of our Brethren; being an Answer to *W. Rogers*, *F. Bugg*, *J. Pennyman* and *J. Bullock.* By *G. W.*

A legal Examination of Abuses of Law.

The Religious Assemblies of the People call'd *Quakers* vindicated.

The Christian-Quaker and his divine Testimony vindicated; in two parts. By *W. Penn* and *G. Whitehead.*

—A Treatise concerning the seven Liberal Arts. By *T. Lawson.*

A Testimony against Tything among Christians By *R. Richardson.*

The Foundation of Tythes shaken. By *Thomas Elwood.*

Tythes ended by Christ. By *W. Gibson.*

The great Case of *Tythes* once more revived. By *Fr. Howgill.*

A Treatise of Oaths, *&c.*

Universal Love. By *W. Smith.*

The Principles of Truth, or a declaration of our Faith, who are called *Quakers.*

An Epistle of Love and good Will to the called and chosen of God. By *J. Songhurst.*

Humphery Smith's Books collected into one Volumn.

A faithful Warning, & Lamentation over *England.* By *W. Bingley.*

The Prisoners Vindication, with a sober Expostulation and Reprehension of Persecutors. By *John Gratton.*